

**CITY OF HAMILTON  
N O T I C E O F M O T I O N**

**Council Date: July 10, 2015**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. GREEN.....**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR .....**

**INCLUSION POLICY ON TRADITIONAL FIRST NATIONS CEREMONIES**

WHEREAS, National Aboriginal Day takes place on June 21st and is a special day to celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton is located on the traditional ancestral lands of the Haudenosaunee and home to over 15 000 indigenous people from the four directions of Turtle Island.

¶THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That staff from our Access and Equity Division, be directed to consult with the Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition and the Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee in order to create an inclusion policy for Traditional First Nations Ceremonies in all public buildings inclusive of Smudging as it relates to Section 13 of the *Smoke Free Ontario Act* which exempts from restrictions otherwise placed on the use of tobacco, the smoking of tobacco or holding lighted tobacco by First Nations and Métis persons for traditional First Nations and Métis cultural or spiritual purposes.

Nya Weh Chi Miigwetch

## Draft York University Statement on Smudging During University Events – January 28, 2014

York University honours and respects the meaningful First Nations and Métis tradition of smudging. This document clarifies York University's commitment to and application of s.13 of the *Smoke Free Ontario Act* in respect to the use of smoke in traditional First Nations and Métis cultural or spiritual ceremonies. Section 13 of the *Smoke Free Ontario Act* exempts from restrictions otherwise placed on the use of tobacco, the smoking of tobacco or holding lighted tobacco by First Nations and Métis persons for traditional First Nations and Métis cultural or spiritual purposes. Other legislative requirements such as those for ventilation are also exempt in these circumstances.

York University also recognizes that its community is made up of a wide and diverse population. In facilitating smudging ceremonies, the university wants to balance the rights of all and accordingly has created these guidelines to help ensure that these traditional smudging practices are honoured and supported.

### Smudging Ceremonies

Smudging is a traditional First Nations and Métis ceremony held when an officiate believes it is appropriate to cleanse an area and/or participants involved in an activity. The officiate of the ceremony circulates a bowl or shell normally with sage, sweet-grass, tobacco, or cedar. These medicines are burned in small quantities and participants voluntarily use the smoke from the medicines to cleanse themselves. York University respects the right of First Nations and Métis people to smudge and has developed these guidelines to provide direction for the practice of smudging during university events. In the interest of the whole of the community the university requests advanced notice when smudging is planned at a campus event.

In order to facilitate an event with smudging, advance notice is important and participants are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

#### A) Fire safety precautions:

Contact CSBO Building & Fire Code Compliance for a trial test with University Fire Inspectors. If the sample smudging causes any false fire alarm signal on the fire panel, another location or pathway must be selected to verify safe to do without causing any false fire alarm.

Be aware of the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.

Never leave any burning material unattended and douse the burning material immediately after the conclusion of the smudging ceremony. Do not let the smudge smolder during the entire event.

#### B) Allergy and scent alerts:

In order to educate, inform and give notice to members in an area, the organizer of the event will affix the poster noted below in the area at least 48 hours in advance of the smudge.

At a suitable time prior to the commencement of the ceremony, inform anyone who may be exposed to the smoke or the scent of the medicines and make arrangements for those that are sensitive or allergic to leave the area. Whenever possible, people are asked to smudge outdoors. Direct managers/employees/students in the ceremonial area to the York University guideline on scented products:

<http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/doc/GuidelinesNotices/ScentedProducts/scentedproduct.pdf>

The University has created the following poster (*need to develop*) to be printed and posted to give notice, educate and address questions members of the York community may have regarding smudging.

Note: Two rooms in the Centre for Aboriginal Student Services (CASS) have been equipped with additional ventilation for smudging ceremonies. The Centre also has a 5lb class fire extinguisher for loan. CASS will maintain a list of spaces where smudging has taken place with CSBO Building & Fire Code Compliance for a trial test with University Fire Inspectors.

For more information see the following factsheet:

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/smoke-free/factsheets/aboriginal.asp>

To see what smudging looks like, you can refer to this video (*we would like to develop our own video*) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4bqX\\_FiEw&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4bqX_FiEw&feature=related)

If you have any questions regarding this statement, please contact the Centre at 416-736-5571 or via email at [cassYork@yorku.ca](mailto:cassYork@yorku.ca)